REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the subject application. The Office Action of August 25, 2004 has been received and contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 1-57 are currently pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 29 are hereby amended. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action of August 25, 2004, claims 1-57 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,654,090 to Kim et al. (hereinafter "Kim '090"). Claims 1-57 are rejected under obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 3, 8, 11, 13-14, 18-19, 22, and 27-30 of Kim '090. Claims 1-5, 7-22, 24, 26, 29-33, 35-50, 52, 54, and 57 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,608,556 to Koma in view of U.S. Patent 6,139,926 to Auman et al. Claims 27, 28, 55, and 56 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Koma in view of Auman further in view of U.S. Patent 5,757,455 to Sugiyama. Claims 6 and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Koma in view of Auman, further in view of "No-Rub Multi-Domain TFT Using Surrounding-Electrode Method". Claims 23 and 55 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Koma in view of Auman further in view of U.S. Patent 6,141,074 to Bos. Claims 51 and 53 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Koma in view of Auman further in view of U.S. Patent 5,936,692 to Van De Witte.

Applicants note that the filing date of Kim '090 (March 30, 2000) is after the foreign priority date of the present application (March 7, 2000). Accordingly, Applicants file a certified English language translation of the priority document Korean Patent No. P2000-1132 to thereby remove Kim '090 as a prior art reference. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner withdraw the §102(e) rejection.

In addition, Applicants file a terminal disclaimer in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.321(c) to overcome this rejection. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner withdraw the double-patenting rejection accordingly.

The rejection of claims 1-57 is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested. Claims 1-57 are allowable over the cited references in that each of independent claims 1 and 29 recites a combination of elements including, for example, "the alignment direction of the liquid crystal layer in the first region is aligned differently from the alignment direction of the liquid crystal layer in the second region, and wherein at least one of the alignment directions is determined by the photo-alignment layer irradiated by a light." (claims 1 and 29). None of the cited references including Koma, Auman, Sugiyama, "No-Rub Multi-Domain TFT Using Surrounding-Electrode Method", Bos, and Van De Witte, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention.

The structure of claims 1 and 29 of the present invention is different from the Koma structure in that Koma discloses "the orientation vectors of the liquid crystal directors in each display picture element are symmetrically restricted by the orientation control electrode, and the boundaries between areas different in orientation vectors are fixed by the orientation control window" (Koma, column 10, lines 57-62). Koma discusses orientation, but does not disclose "the alignment direction of the liquid crystal layer in the first region is aligned differently from the alignment direction of the liquid crystal layer in the second region" as recited in claim 1.

Furthermore, Koma discloses that "the orientation vectors of the liquid crystal directors in each display picture element are symmetrically restricted by the orientation control electrode" (Koma, column 10, lines 57-60). Therefore, Koma teaches away from the recited element of claim 1 that "at least one of the alignment directions is determined by the photo-alignment layer irradiated by a light", because Koma teaches that "the orientation vectors... are symmetrically restricted by the orientation control electrode". Therefore, it would not have been obvious to use Auman, which allegedly teaches a photo-alignment layer, to supply the deficiency in Koma, because Koma teaches away from using a photo-alignment layer for this purpose.

The Examiner does not suggest that Sugiyama, "No-Rub Multi-Domain TFT Using Surrounding-Electrode Method", Bos, and Van De Witte disclose or suggest this element recited in claim 1, and Applicants submit that they do not so disclose. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 and claims 2-28 and 57 which depend from claim 1, and claim 29 and claims 30-56 which depend from claim 29 are allowable over the cited references.

Applicant believes the foregoing amendments place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited. If the Examiner deems that a telephone conference would further the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the telephone number (202) 496-7500. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. A duplicate copy of this page is enclosed.

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Respectfully submitted,

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